



Idaho Library Association Conference 2021

No One's Future Has Been Written Yet

Futures Thinking Can Better
Prepare You for Multiple Futures

TEACH THE
FUTURE 

Deana



+

Annie



ICfL's engagement with Futures Thinking

2019 – learned about Futures Thinking from Peter Bishop at the Futures Festival

2020 & 2021 – Peter led Futures Thinking activities with SPLAT

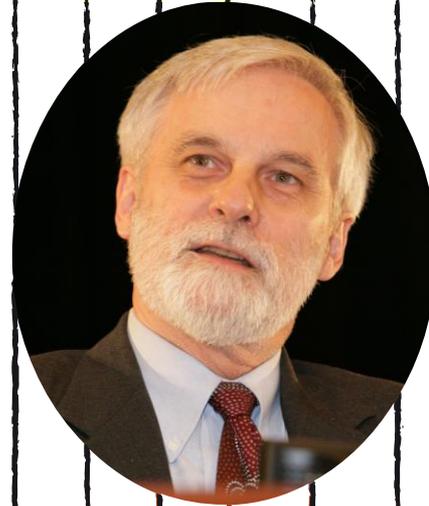
2021 – Completed Professional Certification in Foresight @ University of Houston



Peter Bishop

2013 to present – Founded and directs Teach the Future

1983 to 2013 – Taught and directed MS program in Studies of the Future and Foresight programs at University of Houston



TEACH THE
FUTURE 

Our ASPIRATION is that every student is prepared to navigate an uncertain world with agency to imagine and create their preferred future

**TEACH THE
FUTURE**

The logo for 'Teach the Future' features the text 'TEACH THE' on the top line and 'FUTURE' on the bottom line in a teal, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a graphic consisting of several teal dots of varying sizes arranged in a roughly circular pattern, with some dots having small vertical lines extending from them.

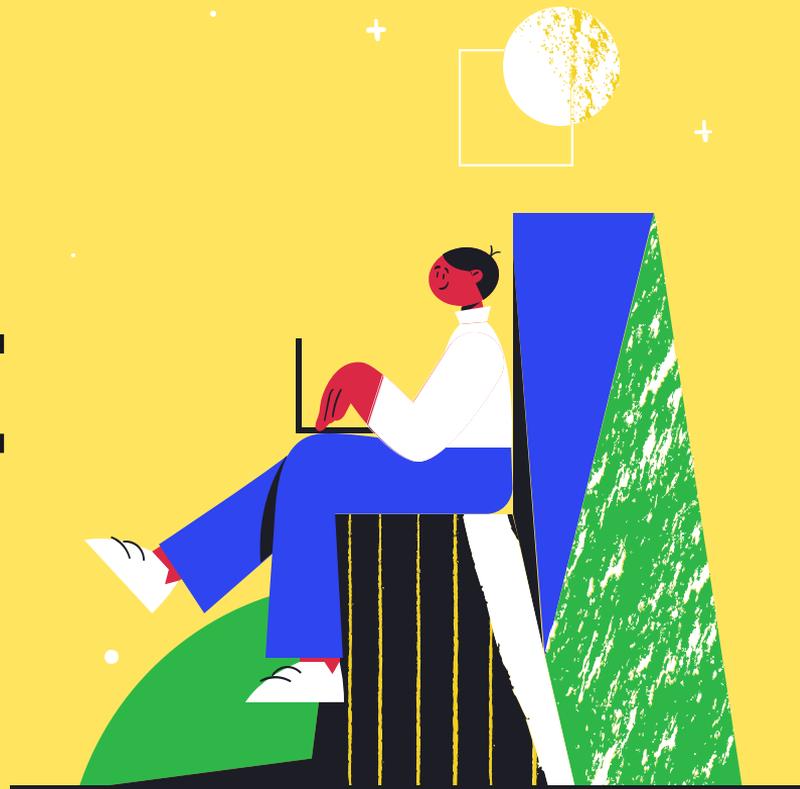
Our MISSION is to teach futures thinking skills to students and educators around the world and to inspire them to influence their futures



What are we doing in this session?

- Overview of what Futures Thinking is
 - History
 - Introduction
 - Framework
- Play a Futures Thinking game
- Call to action!
- Share resources

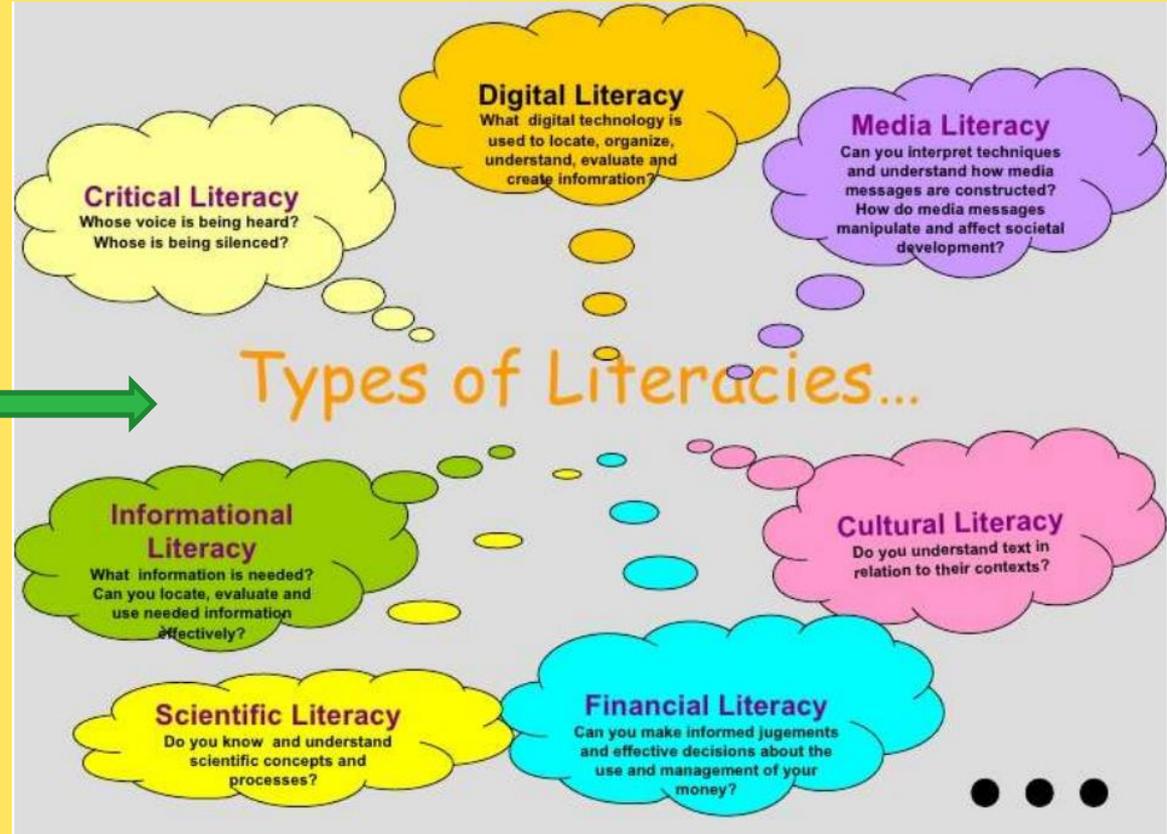
Is there only ONE future?



***NO!* There
are **MANY**
futures.**



Multiple Literacies



Do you think it's important for community members to...



Change

Be aware of changes going on today?



Somewhere

Accept changes are headed somewhere



Assumption

Challenge assumption those changes are inevitable



Uncertainty

Think contingently and embrace uncertainty



Influence

Be optimistic, because we can influence the future



Vision

Set a vision and pursue relentlessly!

Futures History

145-90BC

Sima Qian

Theory of Cycles
of Virtue

1902

H.G. Wells

Advocated for
new academic
study,
methodology vs.
speculation

Mid-1960's

Rachel Carson

"Silent Spring"
changed way
look at
environment

2002

APF

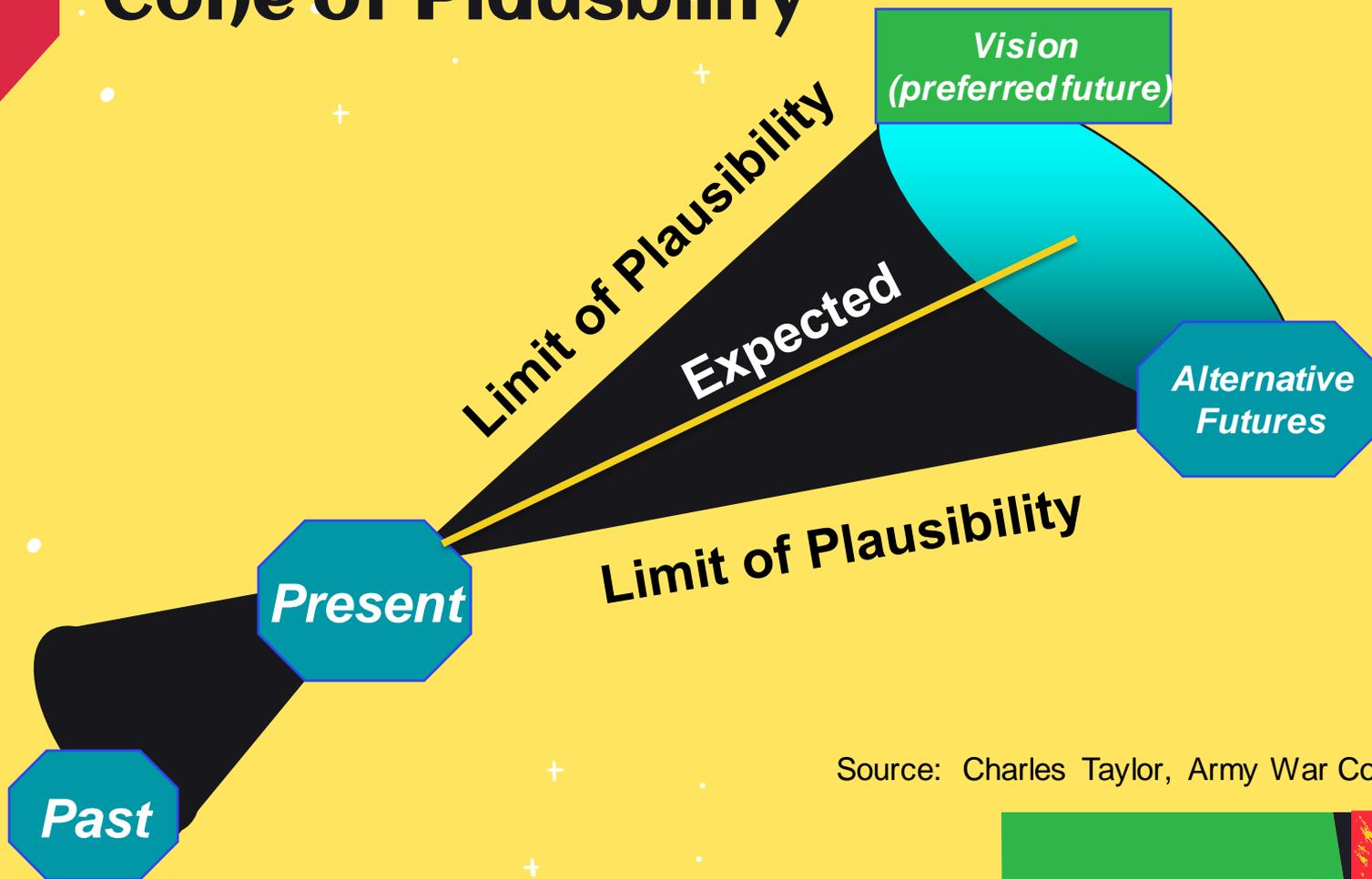
Association of
Professional
Futurists
founded

The Actual Futures



Expected	Alternative	Preferred
Where we are headed	What might happen instead	What we want to happen
If everything stays exactly the same	Plausible if something less likely/ unexpected happens	Expected or preferred alternatives
The result of conditions and trends	The result of events and issues	Result of vision, goals, plans, and actions
Has momentum	There are contingencies	We have agency

Cone of Plausibility



Source: Charles Taylor, Army War College

The Framework

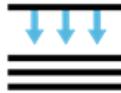


Framing

Scoping the project; attitude, audience, work environment, rationale and purpose, objectives and teams



Focal Issue



Scanning

Collecting information; the system, history and context of the issue and how to scan for information regarding the future of the issue



Information



Forecasting

Describing baseline and alternative futures; drivers and uncertainties, tools, diverging and converging approaches and alternatives



Baseline &
Alternative
Futures



Visioning

Choosing a preferred future; implications of the forecast, and envisioning designed outcomes



Preferred
Future



Planning

Organizing to achieve the vision; strategy, options and plans



Strategy &
Plans



Acting

Implementing the plan; communicating the results, developing action agendas and institutionalizing strategic thinking and intelligence systems



Actions



**Think about
the authors
in different
subject
areas in
your
library...**

**...and their
different
perspectives
on the
future**

Do they present the future as...

inevitable, foggy, a game of chance,
predictable, ...?

History

Engineering

Statics

Anthropology

Sociology

Science Fiction



Future Scenario Types



Discipline

Order is deliberately coordinated or imposed



Collapse

Society as we know it has come apart



Transformation

A profound historical evolution has occurred



Growth

“Progress” has continued

Let's play a game!



We'll be using Jamboard to Play

activity < 1/5 > ←

background | Clear frame

Group 1

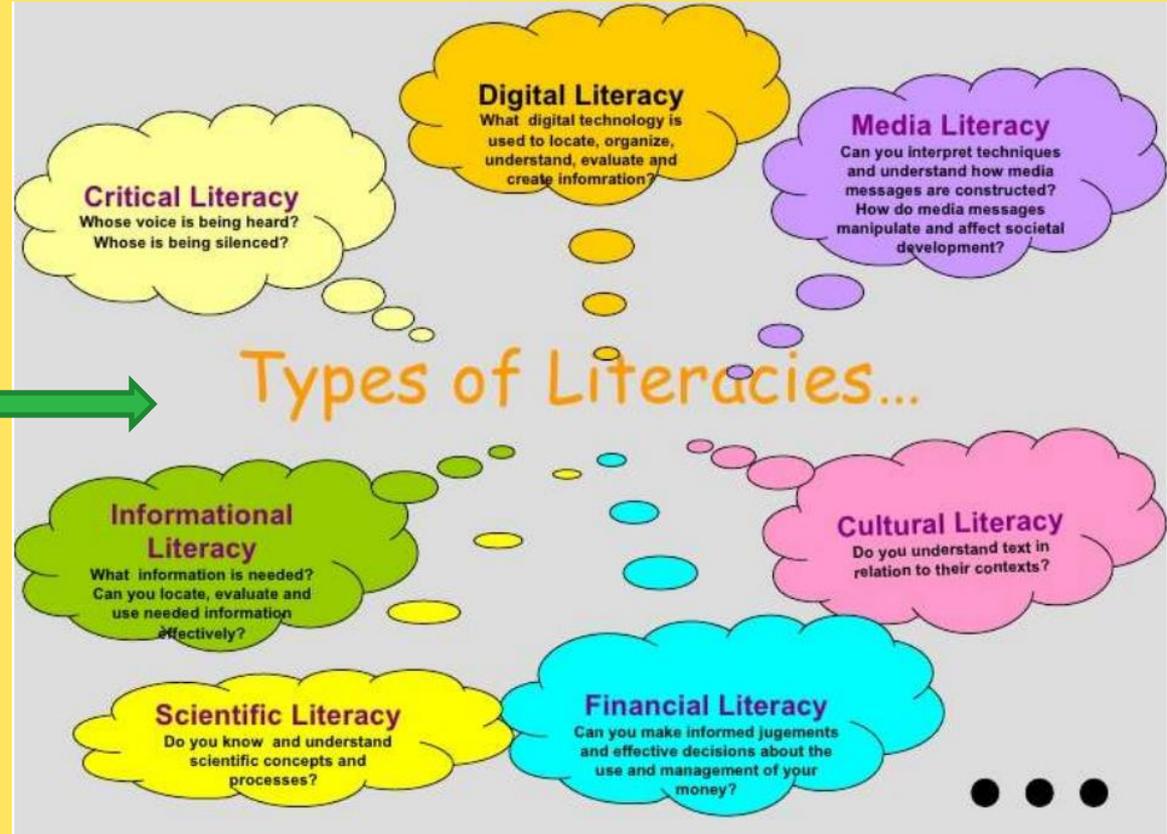
THE THING FROM THE FUTURE!

In a society characterized by...	there exists a...	having to do with...	that produces...
Scenario	Theme/ location	An object	A mood

What is it?

**Tell us about
your things
from the
future**

Multiple Literacies



Call to Action!

Some things you can do...in the future

Read



- SPLAT Curiosity Report, <http://splat.lili.org/>
- Teach the Future Newsletter, <https://www.teachthefuture.org/newsletter>

Play

- Play a game
- Provide feedback



Resources

Learn

- Introduction to Futures Thinking (Free), <https://www.coursera.org/learn/introduction-to-futures-thinking>
- University of Houston Foresight Certificate, <https://uh.edu/technology/programs/professional/fore/>

Read

- Institute for the Future Newsletter, <https://www.iftf.org/partner-with-iftf/subscribe/>
- Futures Thinking Playbook, <https://www.teachthefuture.org/books>

Play

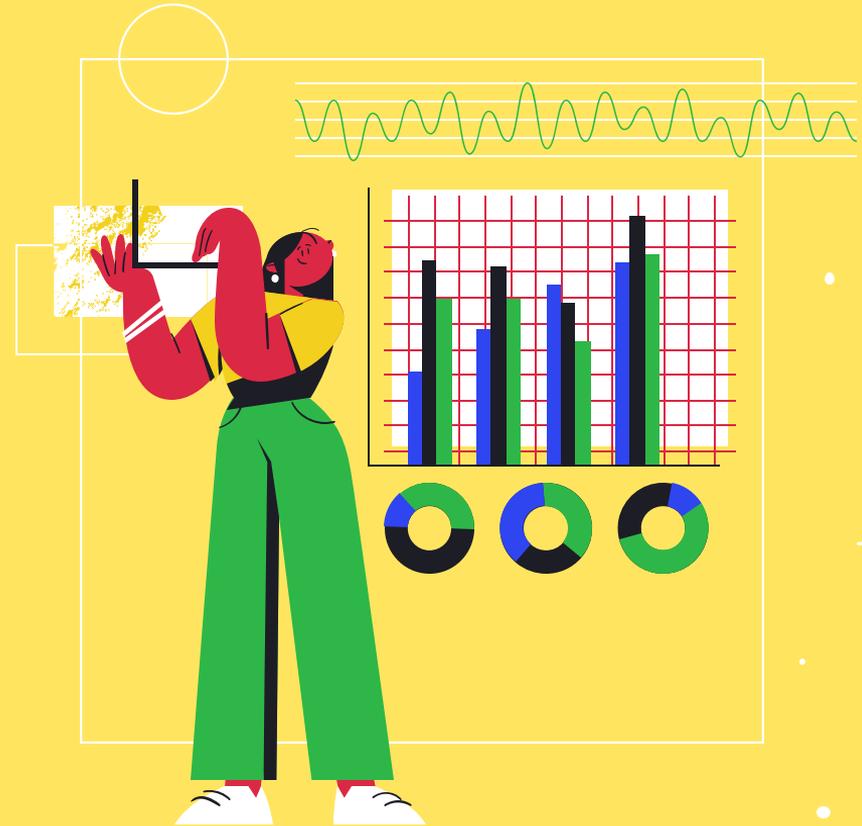
- Game info <http://situationlab.org/futurething-print-and-play-edition/>
- Full Teach the Future Catalog, <https://library.teachthefuture.org/>
- [Games SPLAT](#) tried



Thanks!

Do you have any questions?

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